

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The claims are 2-6, which were rejected on the basis of the prior art. Specifically, claims 3-6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Mukai et al. U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2004/0011776* in view of *Parmelee et al. U.S. Patent No. 4,731,518* and further in view of the newly-cited reference *Yamada et al. U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0010753*. The remaining claim 2 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Mukai et al.* in view of *Parmelee et al.* in view of *Benfield U.S. Patent No. 3,594,534* and further in view of *Yamada et al.*

This rejection is respectfully traversed and reconsideration is expressly requested.

As set forth in claim 6, Applicants' invention provides a welding wire storage device for a welding system including a housing having a free space, a first end region and a second end region opposite the first end region, a wire core surrounding a welding wire arcuately arranged to lie freely in the free space of the housing, the wire core having a first end fixed in the first end region of the housing, a measuring

device for detecting deflection of the wire core, a guide element on the second end region displaceably mounting the wire core, a wire guide hose for the wire core, and first and second coupling mechanisms arranged on the housing for connection with the wire guide hose.

Applicants' January 4, 2011 Response pointed out the differences between Applicants' welding wire storage device as recited in claim 6 and the primary reference to *Mukai et al.* For example, as the Examiner has recognized, *Mukai et al.* fails to disclose or suggest a welding wire storage device for a welding system including a wire core, a wire guide hose for the wire core, and a measuring device for detecting deflection of the welding wire.

The defects and deficiencies of the primary reference to *Mukai et al.* are nowhere remedied by the secondary reference to *Parmelee et al.*, which simply discloses a gas metal arc welding device where the welding wire E is guided through an electrode guide 100. *Parmelee et al.* fails to disclose or suggest a welding wire storage device for storing small amounts of welding wire, for instance during backward movements of the welding wire during modern welding techniques.

The Examiner takes the position that the newly-cited reference to *Yamada et al.* renders it obvious to one skilled in the art to modify *Mukai et al.* with a measuring device for detecting deflection of the welding wire. It is respectfully submitted that the Examiner's position is unfounded because *Yamada et al.* is not reasonably pertinent to the problem addressed by Applicants' welding wire storage device as recited in claim 6.

Yamada et al. discloses a wire electrode feeder for electric discharge machining devices, which is totally different from a welding wire storage device as recited in Applicants' claim 6. In the case of a wire electric discharge machine device a workpiece 2 is cut by means of a wire 1. To achieve straight cutting lines a deflection of the wire 1 must be avoided. During the cutting process the wire 1 is conveyed only in one direction. Reversing of the conveyance direction and storage of small amounts of the wire 1 in a wire storage device is not intended. The optical sensor 100 detects deflections of the wire 1 during the insertion of the wire 1 at the beginning of the cutting process when an inserting load is heavy. The optical sensor 100 is arranged in the region where the wire 1 proceeds in a straight manner and not in a

housing where the welding wire is arcuately arranged in the housing, as is the case in Applicants' welding wire storage device as recited in claim 6.

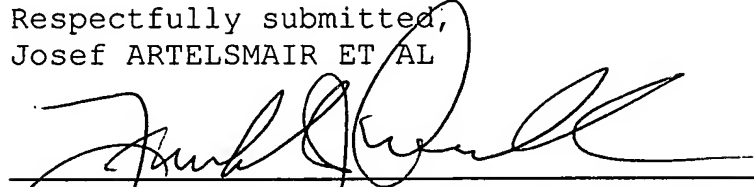
Because *Yamada et al.* relates to a device totally different from a welding device, it is respectfully submitted that a person ordinarily skilled in the art would have no reason to consider *Yamada et al.* for modifying the other references cited in the Office Action, particularly where *Yamada et al.* fails to disclose or suggest the essential features of Applicants' welding wire storage device as recited in claim 6.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Applicants' claim 6, together with claims 2-5 which depend thereon, are patentable over the cited references whether considered alone or in combination.

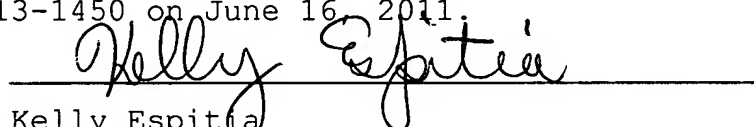
In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully requested that the claims be allowed and that this case be passed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,
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